DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

The Central Region is comprised of 19 counties in the center of Missouri. This region is home to several cities including Columbia, Mexico, Rolla, Camdenton, Lebanon, and the state capital, Jefferson City.

The Central Region workforce has more than 318,000 employees, making up 10.7 percent of Missouri's employment. In 2022, about 51.7 percent of the workforce was male and 48.3 percent was female, which roughly matches the Missouri average of 51.1 percent males and 48.9 percent female workers in the workforce. The regional average unemployment rate in 2022 was 2.4 percent.

The workforce is getting older in the Central Region, a trend continuing throughout Missouri and the U.S. In 2022, 22.3 percent of the workforce was age 55 or older, up from 19 percent a decade earlier.

For the region, 11.8 percent of the workforce was non-white and 3.7 percent was Hispanic or Latino. This compares to the state averages of 18.1 percent non-white and 4.9 percent Hispanic or Latino.

In the Central Region, 6.0 percent of the region's population (ages 18 to 64) speaks a language other than English at home. By comparison, Missouri was at 7.1 percent and the U.S. was at 23.7 percent.

The Central Region has a higher percentage of the population with a disability compared to the state and nation. For the Central Region, 13.8 percent of the population has a disability compared to 12.3 percent in Missouri and 10.3 percent in the U.S.
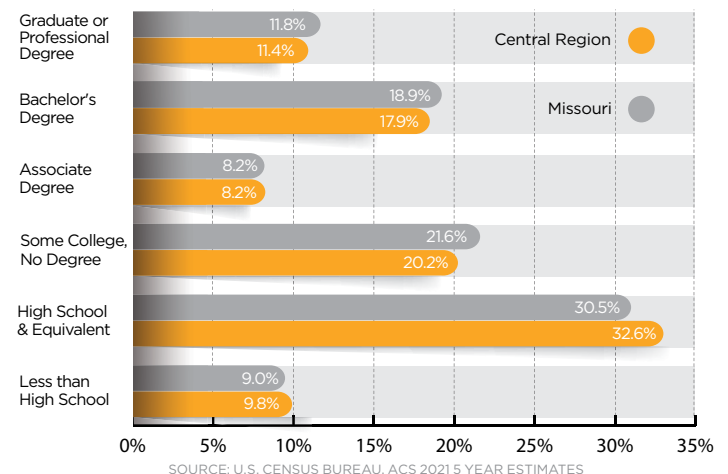
Workforce Demographics

	Central MO	Missouri	Nationwide
Average Monthly Employment in 2022	318,099	2,984,340	158,291,000
Average Unemployment Rate in 2022	2.4%	2.5%	3.6%
Male	51.7%	51.1%	51.5%
Female	48.3%	48.9%	48.5%
Non-White	11.8%	18.1%	24.2%
Hispanic or Latino	3.7%	4.9%	17.4%
Ages 55 or Older	22.3%	22.5%	22.8%
With Disabilities (Ages 18-64)	13.8%	12.3%	10.3%
Below Poverty Levels (Ages 18-64)	15.1%	12.5%	11.7%
Language other than English(Ages 18-64)	6.0%	7.1%	23.7%
Education of Associate Degree or Higher	37.5%	38.9%	42.4%
Veterans (Age 18-64)	5.6%	4.9%	4.5%

SOURCES: CENSUS ACS 2021-5YR EST.; LEHD 2ND QUARTER; BLS LAUS 2022

Educational attainment rates for the Central Region are slightly behind those of the state in regards to bachelor's or advanced degrees. About thirty-eight percent of the region's population, age 25 and older, has an associate, bachelor's, or advanced degree compared to 39 percent for the state, and about 42 percent for the nation. About 9.8 percent of the region's population of age 25 and older has less than high school education.

318,000
EMPLOYEES
10.7%
OF MISSOURI'S EMPLOYMENT

Educational Attainment

Central Region
Missouri

	Central Region	Missouri
Graduate or Professional Degree	11.4%	11.8%
Bachelor's Degree	17.9%	18.9%
Associate Degree	8.2%	8.2%
Some College, No Degree	20.2%	21.6%
High School & Equivalent	32.6%	30.5%
Less than High School	9.8%	9.0%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, ACS 2021 5 YEAR ESTIMATES

CENTRAL REGION

INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

The Central Region averaged more than 284,800 jobs in 2022. The region gained 2.1 percent more employment from 2021 to 2022. Missouri employment increased by 2.9 percent in 2022. From 2018 to 2022, the Central Region averaged 0.28 percent compound annual growth for an overall gain of 1.4 percent. During that same period (2018-2022) Missouri's compound annual employment gain was 0.2 percent for an overall gain of 0.9 percent.

Central Employment Annual Growth Rate
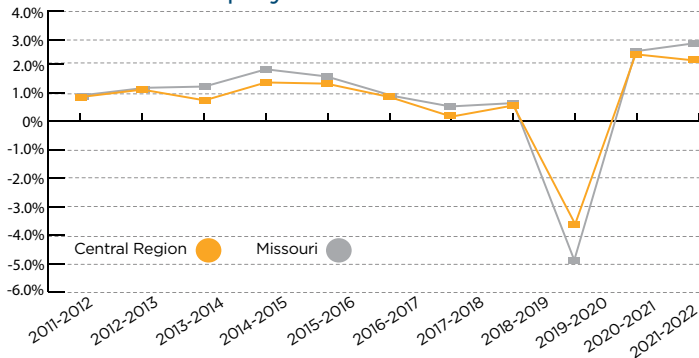
SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, QCEW

Health Care and Social Assistance is the largest industry sector in the Central Region, with over 42,900 jobs in 2022, even though the industry added merely 42 jobs at a compound annual growth rate of 0.02 percent since 2018. *The Retail Trade* industry continues to be one of the largest employing industries in the region with over 34,800 jobs in 2022, a gain of over 1,000 jobs since 2018.

The *Finance and Insurance* industry added the most jobs, with a gain of over 2,150 jobs since 2018. *Educational Services* is the third largest industry with over 29,600 jobs in 2022, an increase of over 1,080 jobs since 2018. *Accommodation and Food Services* and *Manufacturing* are among the largest industries in the region. *Accommodation and Food Services* gained some jobs at a compound annual rate of 0.2 percent from 2018 to 2022 and in the same period *Manufacturing* added 1,500 jobs at a rate of 1.1 percent. *Public Administration* (-1,328) and *Wholesale Trade* (-142) are the industry sectors that lost jobs compared to 2018 employment levels.

Central Region Top Employing Industries

Industry	Employment 2018	Employment 2022	Net Change	2018-2022 Empl. CAGR	2021 Annual Wages
Health Care & Social Assist.	42,893	42,935	42	0.02%	$55,164
Retail Trade	33,855	34,858	1,003	0.6%	$35,400
Educational Services	28,605	29,692	1,087	0.7%	$53,196
Accommodation & Food Servs.	29,069	29,341	272	0.2%	$22,308
Manufacturing	27,302	28,802	1,500	1.1%	$53,064
Public Administration	26,697	25,369	-1,328	-1.0%	$45,540
Construction	13,244	15,151	1,907	2.7%	$54,252
Admin.&Sup. & Waste Mngmt & Remediation Servs.	12,146	12,811	665	1.1%	$35,352
Finance & Insurance	10,400	12,553	2,153	3.8%	$81,684
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	8,486	10,013	1,527	3.4%	$62,928
Transportation & Warehousing	7,199	8,619	1,420	3.7%	$41,484
Wholesale Trade	8,442	8,300	-142	-0.3%	$66,732

SOURCE: LEHD QWI, 2018-2022 QUARTER 3 DATA

LOCATION QUOTIENT

To understand the major industries within a region, an analysis of industry concentration or clustering can be useful. The Location Quotient (LQ) describes the concentration of an industry in a geographic region, in relation to the nation, with 1.0 being the national average. Industries with higher than 1.0 LQ indicate a concentration.

The Central Region has higher concentrations in *Gasoline Stations and Fuel Dealers; Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book Retailers; Credit Intermediation and Related Activities;* and *General Merchandise Retailers.*


HIGHEST 2022
LQ 2.1
GASOLINE STATIONS

2022 Central Region Location Quotients

Industry	Employment	Location Quotient
Gasoline Stations & Fuel Dealers	4,029	2.1
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book Retailers	5,151	1.8
Credit Intermediation & Related Activities	8,572	1.7
General Merchandise Retailers	8,159	1.4
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	5,066	1.3
Building Material Supplies Dealers	3,571	1.3
Wood Product Manufacturing	1,036	1.3
Accommodation	4,064	1.2
Transit & Ground Passenger Transport.	934	1.2
Printing & Related Support Activities	816	1.1
Food Services & Drinking Places	24,700	1.1
Nonmetallic Mineral Product Manufacturing	861	1.1
Animal Production & Aquaculture	540	1.1
Machinery Manufacturing	2,239	1.1
Heavy & Civil Engineering Construction	2,138	1.1

SOURCE: BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, QCEW

CENTRAL REGION

Projected growth in industries helps to identify future employment needs for an area. Projections indicate that the largest industry growth in the Central Region between 2020-2030 will be in *Educational Services; Ambulatory Health Care Services; Administrative and Support Services; Professional, Scientific,* and *Technical Services; Social Assistance;* and *Transportation Equipment Manufacturing* industries.
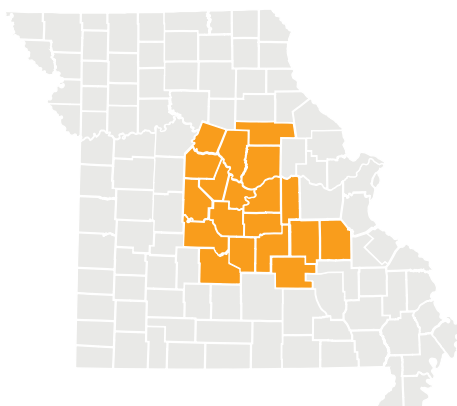
Central Region Largest Growth Industries 2020-2030

Industry	Employment 2020 Estimated	Employment 2030 Projected	Change 2020-2030 Numeric	Change 2020-2030 Percent
Educational Services	30,123	32,845	2,722	9.0%
Ambulatory Health Care Services	10,200	11,917	1,717	16.8%
Administrative & Support Services	8,744	10,306	1,562	17.9%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	8,355	9,869	1,514	18.1%
Social Assistance	7,246	8,215	969	13.4%
Transportation Equipment Manufacturing	3,373	4,328	955	28.3%
Nursing & Residential Care Facilities	8,089	8,986	897	11.1%
Specialty Trade Contractors	7,122	7,831	709	10.0%
Hospitals	16,261	16,899	638	3.9%
Management of Companies & Enterprises	4,291	4,727	436	10.2%

SOURCE: MERIC INDUSTRY PROJECTIONS, 2020-2030

PROJECTED GROWTH BY INDUSTRY HELPS TO IDENTIFY FUTURE EMPLOYMENT NEEDS FOR AN AREA.

OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS

MERIC produces occupational projections that estimates labor demand over a 10-year period. MERIC categorizes these occupations using its Now-Next-Later method to help job seekers understand the training, education, and experience requirements for various occupations.

Now jobs typically require short-term on-the-job training, little to no experience, and/or a high school diploma. **Now** occupations with the most projected openings are *Cashiers; Fast Food and Counter Workers; and Waiters and Waitresses. Ushers, Lobby Attendants, and Ticket Takers; Bartenders; and Hosts and Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, and Coffee Shop* are projected to be the fastest growing **Now** occupations over the next decade.

Next jobs typically require a non-degree certificate, associate degree, apprenticeship, some experience, or moderate- to long-term training. *Cooks; Nursing Assistants; and Heavy and Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers* are projected to have the most openings for the **Next** category of occupations. *Cooks; Fitness Trainers and Aerobics Instructors; and Supervisors of Food Prep and Serving Workers* are projected to be the fastest growing **Next** occupations

Later jobs typically require a bachelor's degree or higher. For **Later** occupations, *General and Operations Managers; Registered Nurses; and Secondary School Teachers* are projected to have the most openings. *Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists; Medical and Health Services Managers; and Software Developers and Software Quality Assurance Analysts and Testers* are the fastest growing **Later** occupations.

Central Region Fastest Growing Occupations

NOW
Ushers, Lobby Attendants, & Ticket Takers
Bartenders
Hosts & Hostesses, Restaurant, Lounge, & Coffee Shop
Home Health & Personal Care Aides
Waiters & Waitresses

NEXT
Cooks, Restaurant
Fitness Trainers & Aerobics Instructors
Supervisors of Food Prep & Serv. Workers
Coating, Painting, & Spraying
Machine Setters, Operators, & Tenders
Loan Interviewers & Clerks

LATER
Market Research Analyst & Marketing Spec.
Medical & Health Services Managers
Software Developers & Software-
Quality Assurance Analysts & Testers
Health Specialties Teachers, Postsecondary
Loan Officers

NOTE: OCCUPATIONS WITH ANNUAL TOTAL OPENINGS OF LESS THAN 50 ARE OMITTED

SOURCE: MERIC OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS, 2020-2030

CENTRAL REGION

Central Region Long-Term Occupational Projections by Top Openings

Occupation	2020 Estimated Employment	2030 Projected Employment	Growth Openings	Exits	Transfers	Total Openings	Median Wages
◎ NOW							
Cashiers	9,384	8,909	-48	778	876	1,606	$22,537
Fast Food & Counter Workers	5,864	6,788	92	613	669	1,374	$21,238
Retail Salespersons	8,301	8,342	4	465	687	1,156	$24,245
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	6,980	8,465	148	494	437	1,079	$24,417
Waiters & Waitresses	4,096	4,946	85	332	540	957	$20,388
◎ NEXT							
Cooks, Restaurant	3,647	5,495	185	269	391	845	$23,969
Nursing Assistants	3,509	3,726	22	232	205	459	$26,769
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	3,361	3,537	18	141	234	393	$41,939
Maintenance & Repair Workers	3,601	3,840	24	131	217	372	$34,631
Supervisors of Food Prep & Serving Workers	1,965	2,404	44	98	223	365	$30,192
◎ LATER							
General & Operations Managers	5,304	5,965	66	112	349	527	$66,036
Registered Nurses	6,956	7,327	37	190	180	407	$61,588
Secondary School Teachers	3,725	4,051	33	103	158	294	$48,057
Teaching Assistants, Postsecondary	2,636	2,824	19	122	128	269	$27,884
Elementary School Teachers	2,721	2,950	23	87	114	224	$46,685

SOURCE: MERIC OCCUPATIONAL PROJECTIONS, 2020-2030

ONLINE JOB POSTINGS

Job postings are an indicator of demand and opportunities in an area, and can assist individuals seeking job opportunities in current in-demand occupations. According to information based on online job posting data collected and aggregated from May 1, 2022 to April 30, 2023 by Lightcast™ for the Central Region, jobs like *Registered Nurses; Retail Salespersons; and First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers* topped the number of online job postings in the region.

Central Region Top Five Online Job Postings in Now-Next-Later Classification

Occupation Title	Online Job Postings
◎ NOW	
Retail Salespersons	2,400
Home Health & Personal Care Aides	1,510
Fast Food & Counter Workers	1,400
Customer Service Representatives	1,390
Secretaries & Administrative Assistants	1,090
◎ NEXT	
First-Line Supervisors of Retail Sales Workers	1,840
Sales Representatives, Wholesale & Manufacturing	1,650
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers	1,610
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	1,430
Food Service Managers	1,150
◎ LATER	
Registered Nurses	6,270
Software Developers	1,610
Postsecondary Teachers	1,240
Managers, All Other	1,220
Computer Occupations, All Other	1,090

SOURCE: LIGHTCAST™, ONLINE JOB ADS FROM MAY 1, 2022 - APRIL 30, 2023